

# UNMC Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center

## Request for Applications

The UNMC Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center will support innovative, significant pilot projects in cancer research with awards up to \$50,000 for one year per grant. This is an omnibus request for applications for projects in six “target areas” detailed in this RFA. All applications must be prepared on the forms provided at the end of this application and emailed, or provided as a file share through **Box.com**, as a single, complete PDF to [cjplate@unmc.edu](mailto:cjplate@unmc.edu), by **4:00 PM on November 14, 2016**. We anticipate that grants will be selected and funding initiated by January 2017. In the subject line of the email, please identify the number of the target area of your proposal, followed by the last name of the Principal Investigator and the words “pilot project application”. (Example: #1, Hollingsworth, Pilot Project Application). You will receive a confirmation e-mail upon receipt and validation of eligibility.

**Target Areas.** The overall goal of this RFA is to help initiate pilot research projects that have the potential to develop into nationally funded high-impact translational cancer research projects in the Cancer Center. Priority will be given to projects with the highest scientific merit and that fit within established or developing programs in the cancer center (detailed below). Additionally, there are special opportunities for funding for unique investigator-initiated cancer concepts of high merit that do not fit within the current cancer center programs, and for early career investigators who have no current national research funding. Programs targeted for funding include:

- #1 - The Cancer Genes and Molecular Regulation Program
- #2 - The Gastrointestinal Cancer Program
- #3 - Molecular and Biochemical Etiology Program
- #4 - Cancer Prevention and Control
- #5 - Investigator-Initiated Cancer Concepts
- #6 - ACS – American Cancer Society Institutional Research Seed Grant

Specific target areas within these programs are discussed in a subsequent section. There will be a two-tier review process for proposals. First, a scientific review of each grant will occur by an expert study section to assign priority scores, followed by a review by the Cancer Center’s Program Leaders and the Senior Leadership Committee to verify quality and programmatic priority.

### **Eligibility**

1. Membership (member or associate member) of the PI and co-PIs in the UNMC Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center. If you are not currently a member of the Cancer Center, please contact Matt Winfrey ([winfrey@unmc.edu](mailto:winfrey@unmc.edu)) to request membership. Awards to postdoctoral fellows or graduate students are not allowed.
2. Focus on cancer-related research.
3. Programmatic Priorities and Translational Goals. Program leaders in the Cancer Center have identified priority areas that will enhance quality of translational research in the cancer center and thereby improve competitiveness for NCI funding and designation as a Comprehensive Cancer Center.
4. There is an opportunity for investigator-initiated priorities. Investigators are welcome to submit novel concepts for competitive research projects with translational potential that are not covered by the programmatic priorities.
5. American Cancer Society-supported seed grants are available to support independent, self-directed investigators early in their careers who have no current national grant support.

### **Criteria for Review of Applications**

1. Quality of the proposal with respect to significance, innovation, and approach of the research proposed
2. Potential impact on cancer diagnosis, therapy, or outcome.
3. Focus of the proposed research with the programs and goals of the cancer center
4. Potential for future funding from national agencies
5. Potential to lead to diagnostic or therapeutic clinical trials

## **Focus Areas of interest within each program.**

### **#1 – CGMRP (Cancer Genes and Molecular Regulation Program)**

- Projects to identify and/or validate new cancer targets.
- Projects to develop and use new preclinical models for target evaluation.
- Projects to develop and test novel methods for delivery of small molecules as potential therapeutics.
- Translational research projects in hematologic malignancies (CLLR), especially development of therapeutic and diagnostic interventions that can be deployed within the next 2 years
- Collaborative projects with other programs

### **#2 – GICP (Gastrointestinal Cancer Program)**

- Emphasis on research related to all GI cancers
- Basic mechanisms of GI cancer development and progression; delineation of the metastatic program of GI cancer cells
- Novel biomarkers for treatment decision-making in stage II/III disease
- New therapies for metastatic GI cancer
- Novel biomarkers for detection of disease
- New projects on colon cancer are encouraged

### **#3 – MBEP (Molecular And Biochemical Etiology Program)**

- Focus on the discovery and validation of new mechanisms of cancer initiation and progression that could lead to identification/validation of new cancer biomarkers or therapeutic targets
- Applications should be clearly focused on breast, prostate or ovarian cancer (if unsure, the applicants are strongly encouraged to seek the advice of the program leaders).
- Important criteria for all applications will be the likelihood of success for future funding (especially NCI funding), innovation, impact, and qualifications of the PI and co-I/Pis
- Grants that span across the three working themes of the MBEP (Genome Instability, Signaling Mechanisms, and Cellular Basis of Cancer) and those with translational potential are particularly encouraged.

### **#4 - Cancer Prevention and Control**

- Focus on population-based research in any area of cancer etiology, prevention or control.
- Grants that seek to improve the knowledge base for promoting reductions in cancer incidence, morbidity, and mortality.
- Grants that develop interventions that reduce cancer risk and incidence or complications secondary to cancer progression.
- Grants that develop interventions to manage symptoms and/or improve quality of life and survivorship.

### **#5 - Investigator Initiated Translational Research**

- Highly innovative translational research that uses knowledge of human biology to develop and test the feasibility of cancer-relevant interventions in humans and/or determines the biological basis for observations made in individuals with cancer or in populations at risk for cancer.
- Unique, high-impact studies directly connected to some aspect of biology of human cancer, that may encompass any form of cellular, molecular, structural, biochemical, genetic, or other appropriate experimental approach.

## **# 6 – ACS (American Cancer Society Institutional Research Seed Grant)**

American Cancer Society (ACS) awards are intended to support independent, self-directed investigators early in their careers who have no current national grant support of their own.

Seed grants are intended to support beginning investigators in initiating cancer research projects that can generate preliminary results enabling them to compete successfully for national research grants in all areas of cancer research.

*ACS Eligibility Requirements are as follows:*

- University of Nebraska investigators at the rank of assistant professor or equivalent who are eligible to apply as a principal investigator for grant support from national agencies (e.g., NIH, ACS, NSF).
- The investigator must be within six (6) years of their first independent research or faculty appointment and have a commitment from the institution for salary and space.
- Awards to postdoctoral fellows, graduate students and senior faculty are **not** allowed.
- Recipients of the award must be, at the time of the application, United States citizens, non-citizen nationals or permanent residents of the United States (see ACS BIG Guidelines).
- Those selected for funding must present their projects to the scientific community and potential donors if requested by the American Cancer Society or the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center. One written progress report and one written final report are also required.

*If you meet the above criteria, please check this box and complete the appended biographical information form for the ACS applications. Your application will be considered for the ACS Target, as well as other identified Target Areas within this request for applications.*

## Format for All Pilot Project Applications

### **Grant Applications should include the following:**

1. A cover page (one-page limit) including the title of the project, the names, titles and roles of each applicant investigator
2. Abstract of up to 350 words summarizing the research question, the background of the project, the specific aims, the proposed approach, and the expected outcomes of the project.
3. Lay abstract (200-word abstract that defines the goals and outcomes of the project in lay terms)
4. A Research Plan (six (6) page limit) that addresses the Specific Aim(s), Background and Significance, Innovation, Preliminary Studies, Research Design and Methods, Statement of Cancer Relevance, and References (not included in page limits). Preliminary data are encouraged, but not required, and appendices will not be accepted.
5. NIH Biosketch for each investigator
6. Other Support Information for each investigator
7. The federal *Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period Direct Costs Only* form (See Attachment), and a detailed budget justification.
8. *ACS applications only* – Complete the attached Biographical Information form and include in the PDF
9. *ACS applications only* – Notarized statement of U.S. residency, if applicable

### **Other Guidelines:**

1. Investigators are limited to a total of two applications, with no more than one application as PI. (One PI and one Co-PI, or two Co-PI applications, maximum)
2. Prior approval of IRB and/or IACUC protocols is not necessary; however, it is expected that IRB or IACUC protocols will be submitted so approval is imminent at the anticipated start date.
3. Arial 11-point font or larger is required, margins must be at least ½ inch on all sides, and font color should be black.
4. Travel is allowed only for recruitment and data collection, and it must be clearly justified.
5. All requests for equipment must be **strongly** justified, and all computer purchases must be justified in the original budget.
6. Requests for faculty salaries are not allowed.
7. Kenneth Cowan, MD, PhD, Director of the UNMC Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center, cannot serve as a co-investigator on any project. *Associate Directors and Program Leaders of the Cancer Center may serve as the PI or the Co-PI of a project.*

### Formatting Requirements

- Arial 11-point font
- 0.5 inch margins on all sides
- Single spaced text
- Space between paragraphs is strongly encouraged

If you have any questions, please contact Tony Hollingsworth by email ([mahollin@unmc.edu](mailto:mahollin@unmc.edu)) phone (402.559.8343).



**Application for a Seed Grant from American Cancer Society Fred & Pamela  
Buffett Cancer Center  
Institutional Research Grant # IRG-13-041-01**

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

**Name** (first and last):

**Degree(s):**

**Academic Title**

**Department**

**School/College**

**Citizenship Status**

U.S. citizen or noncitizen national  
Permanent resident of U.S. (*attach notarized evidence of residency*)

**Year last degree conferred:**

**Year of first independent position:**

**Verification of Applicant Eligibility by Department Chair** (*Applicants must be within six years of their first independent research or faculty appointment, must be salaried faculty with appropriate committed research facilities, and may not have competitive national funding active at the start date of the proposed IRG allocation.*)

**Name of Department Chair**

**Signature**

**Date:**

**Applicant Mentor** (*Successful candidates will identify and work closely with an appropriate institutional mentor.*)

**Name of Mentor**

**Signature**

**Date:**

**How did you hear about this program?**

- Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center Email [ ]
- Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center Website [ ]
- UNMC Today [ ]
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_